

Clannad Education Centre

Inspection dates

11–12 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Good	2
Pupils' achievement	Good	2
Pupils' behaviour and personal development	Good	2
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Quality of curriculum	Good	2
Pupils' welfare, health and safety	Good	2
Leadership and management	Good	2

Summary of key findings

This school is good because

- Students make rapid progress with their learning, despite their previous negative experiences of education.
- Teachers have a very good understanding of the students they teach, the levels at which they are working, their personal interests and their individual learning needs.
- The curriculum is organised into subjects and themes which engage and interest students while taking full account of the requirements of their statements of special educational needs.
- The students are educated in a safe and secure environment due to the diligent way in which school leaders attend to all aspects of their welfare, health and safety.
- The headteacher, ably supported by the company's head of education, has high aspirations for students' achievement and continuously implements improvements in teaching and learning.

It is not yet outstanding because

- The curriculum is still developing and does not yet provide sufficient breadth or depth of experience in some areas of learning, including science and human and social subjects.
- Students do not have sufficient opportunities to contribute to, and benefit from, the life of the local community.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets schedule 1 of The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended by The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection took place with one day's notice.
- Three extended periods of teaching were observed, taught by three teachers. Meetings were held with the headteacher, the company's head of education and an additional teacher.
- Questionnaires completed by six members of staff were evaluated. Students' views were contributed through informal conversations throughout the inspection. There were insufficient responses to the on-line Parent View questionnaire for these to be evaluated.
- The inspector read a variety of documents, including school policies, examples of students' work, records of their achievement and progress, and the school's evaluation of its development over its first year.

Inspection team

David Young, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The Clannad Education Centre is owned by Five Rivers Child Care Ltd, a social enterprise organisation which provides education for young people who live in residential accommodation operated by the company.
- It is a small school which provides education for boys and girls aged between 11 and 16 years. Students who are placed at the school are mostly disaffected and have a history of disrupted schooling, particularly as a result of behavioural, emotional and social difficulties.
- The current students on the roll of the school are aged between 13 and 15 years. Each has a statement of special educational needs.
- The majority of the placements at the school are planned to be short term, often as a result of crisis intervention, although longer-term placements do occur.
- The school aims to provide a small intimate learning environment, which is well organised, calm and tranquil, and to create a safe and nurturing environment in which pupils can work and learn.
- The school was registered as an independent school in September 2012 and this is its first inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to develop the breadth and depth of the curriculum by:
 - extending the existing science curriculum with opportunities for practical experimentation and fair testing
 - broadening the range of human and social topics provided
 - introducing accreditation under the national unit award scheme at levels 1 and 2, to raise students' expectations of what they can achieve.
- Ensure that there is a continuous emphasis on grammatical accuracy in students' written work.
- Increase the range of visits to local community amenities and seek wider opportunities for students to contribute to the local community.

Inspection judgements

Pupils' achievement

Good

Students make good progress with their learning over time because of good teaching. The school has limited data available due to the relatively short time for which it has been open, and the small number of students who remain in the school for more than a few weeks. However, the headteacher gathers available information from previous schools and places an urgent priority on testing students' knowledge and understanding when the students arrive, to be clear about their starting points. Students who have had a significant educational experience in the school have improved their levels of learning in a short space of time. In these cases, their rate of progress in English and mathematics exceeds national expectations.

Students retain essential knowledge and skills as they learn and demonstrate the ability to apply these in their future learning. Students are encouraged to read fluently and they demonstrate the ability to make inferences and predictions from the text. They write expressively and demonstrate mature reflection in their evaluation of what they read, but they are mostly less successful in achieving accuracy with grammar and punctuation in their writing. Students demonstrate success in applying their mathematical skills in their wider work, for example plotting graphs or calculating dimensions in science. Students increase in motivation as a result of very positive encouragement and begin to accept a small degree of responsibility for their own learning. As a result, a small number has achieved success in GCSE examinations, despite having missed much of the Key Stage 4 curriculum before joining the school.

Pupils' behaviour and personal development

Good

Students' personal development and behaviour are good. The school works effectively with the students' residences to help them overcome their negative views and uncertainty about taking part in full-time education. Their attendance improves but remains below the national average, hindered, in part, by a number of authorised absences for a variety of reasons. Staff within the school provide individual levels of support and supervision to enable students to develop their personal communication and social skills.

The school places a strong emphasis on the spiritual and moral development of students. Success is achieved in increasing self-esteem and confidence to underpin successful learning. The school gradually achieves good success in motivating students to accept responsibility for their actions. There is an ethos of mutual respect within the multicultural environment of the school and students' residences as staff act as good role models in their relationships and expectations. Progress in improving behaviour is relatively slow given the disrupted previous experiences of students, but the number of incidents reduces over time and students are enabled to value the education they are receiving.

Increasing use is being made of off-site visits to help students develop their social skills and to prepare them for life after school. Students visit places of historic and cultural interest and are helped to understand the role of services and institutions in national life. However, there are limited opportunities for students to take part in activities which require them to make a personal contribution in the wider community. Students demonstrate the ability to reflect and to offer considered personal judgements on situations encountered in their personal lives and through their learning. The school has ensured that where political issues are considered that steps have been taken to offer a balanced presentation of opposing views.

Quality of teaching**Good**

The quality of teaching is good and has a positive impact on students' achievement. Teachers quickly develop a secure understanding of students' starting points, particularly their levels in English and mathematics. As a result, they plan activities and tasks which extend students' learning across a number of subjects and themes. There are excellent relationships between staff and students, based on sensitivity together with high expectations. Students are provided with excellent individual support to help them engage and to ensure they stay on task. At the same time, teachers are aware of the need to develop students' independence in learning.

The lessons planned by teachers are broken down into a series of activities using a good variety of resources and learning styles. Students do not remain passive; their ideas are sought, skilful questioning draws them into discussion and they record their findings in a variety of ways. Particularly good use is made of computers to provide colourful visual images which engage attention and create in students a desire to respond to the challenges presented. Students also make appropriate use of computers for research and for the presentation of aspects of their work. Students' behaviour is managed well and teachers recognise the unpredictable responses they may receive from students on a day-to-day basis. Learning is well paced, with students engaged in continuous responses to tasks and activities; learning is consolidated by subtle repetition and reinforcement of key ideas.

Teachers mark students' work continuously and provide students with instant feedback on what they have done well and how they may improve. National Curriculum levels are used to assess the standard at which students are working and the information gained is used effectively to gain a clear picture of the rate at which they are making progress. Regular written reports are produced for parents and carers which provide an accurate summary of the progress students are making in their academic studies and their personal development.

Quality of curriculum**Good**

The quality of the curriculum is good and is kept under continuous review. Good progress has been made in establishing a suitably balanced curriculum in a relatively short time. Good attention is given to the development of literacy and numeracy skills, starting from a suitable analysis of students' prior learning. Teachers ensure that the full range of areas of learning are included, despite the short-term placements for some students. The teaching of science focuses mainly on biology and this is taught very well. Human and social topics contain a good emphasis on the personal and social development of students, but individual subjects such as history and geography are taught incidentally rather than systematically.

Appropriate attention is given to the requirements of students' statements of special educational needs and the careful production and monitoring of individual education plans. The school makes effective use of off-site visits to provide first-hand experience of learning environments. There are suitable planned opportunities for careers education and transition to further education or employment for older students, using a range of agencies. Older students have the opportunity to work successfully towards GCSE examinations and ASDAN (Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network) awards. To date, the school has not introduced accreditation such as level 1 and 2 unit awards, which could be achieved across a range of subjects, in a relatively short time, by students of various abilities.

Pupils' welfare, health and safety**Good**

Students' welfare, health and safety are good and all regulatory requirements are met. The school gives good attention to the development and consistent implementation of policies and procedures, including those for eliminating any bullying. Appropriate strategies are implemented for managing

behaviour, and for the prevention of bullying, with a suitable emphasis on positive rewards and reinforcement. Comprehensive arrangements are in place for safeguarding students. All members of staff have received up-to-date training at the appropriate levels, including the designated teacher for child protection. There is effective integration between the procedures and expectations in students' residences and in the school. Suitable procedures are implemented to ensure health and safety regulations are met, including completion of the required regular fire safety checks and procedures. Arrangements for first aid and oversight of students' health are secure and benefit from effective cooperation between the school and welfare staff. There are good levels of supervision at all times, during and beyond the school day, and appropriate risk assessments have been completed for individual students and activities. All the required checks on the suitability of staff are completed rigorously and recorded appropriately.

Leadership and management

Good

The leadership and management of the school are good and all regulations for this standard are met. There is good integration of procedures for policy production, oversight of students, and staff training, between the school and the residential provision. Excellent attention is given to the learning needs of students and the extent of the progress they are making. Leaders have ensured that there is a suitable balance between academic and personal development for students. The parent company provides high-quality support for the school; for example with oversight of recruitment and selection, and monitoring of the work of the school and its staff. All important aspects of staff training are monitored and implemented within required timescales.

The premises are suitable for the number of students being educated and are maintained to a suitable standard of decoration. Appropriate outside space is available for recreation and suitable use is made of off-site facilities for physical education and games. The school's prospectus provides all the required information for parents and carers and the school's complaints policy sets out an appropriate sequence of procedures. Senior staff within both the school and the company have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. The school has come a long way in a short time and has demonstrated the capacity for continued improvement.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	A school which provides an exceptional quality of education and significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 2	Good	A school which provides a high quality of education that exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 3	Adequate	A school which meets minimum requirements but needs to improve the quality of education it provides.
Grade 4	Inadequate	A school where minimum requirements are not met and/or the quality of education has serious weaknesses.

School details

Unique reference number	138378
Inspection number	420277
DfE registration number	305/6005

This inspection was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Day special school for behavioural, emotional and social difficulties
School status	Independent School
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	3
Number of part time pupils	1
Proprietor	Five Rivers Child Care Ltd
Chair	Linda Moss
Headteacher	Myrtle Trotman
Date of previous school inspection	This is the school's first inspection
Annual fees (day pupils)	£25,350
Email address	Linda.moss@five-rivers.org

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